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Catherine II. et la Révolution Française, d'après de nouveaux documents. Par CH. DE LARIVIÈRE. Avec préface de ALFRED RAMBAUD, professeur à la Faculté des Lettres de Paris, Membre correspondant de l'Académie des Sciences de Saint-Petersbourg. (Paris: H. Le Soudier. 1895. Pp. xxxiii, 396.)

M. LARIVIÈRE'S book is one of four volumes in which he is to describe Catherine's private life, her family, favorites, friends, and opinions. This account of her attitude towards the French Revolution belongs, chronologically, to the conclusion of the series, but the author has published it first, doubtless, because the subject has great importance in the studies on the Revolution now so eagerly pursued, and also on account of the special interest the French feel in the story of their relations with Russia. As M. Alfred Rambaud remarks in the preface he has fittingly been asked to write: "Les amis de l'alliance franco-russe voient nettement, aujourd'hui, le point d'arrivée; dans ce livre ils trouveront le point de départ." M. Larivière has conscientiously mastered the literature of his subject, an excellent bibliography of which he prints at the end of his book. Since he desired to sketch the figure of Catherine chiefly according to her correspondence, he has depended largely for his material upon the great *Recueil de la Société Impériale d'Histoire de Russie*, which already includes ninety-three volumes quarto. A work of this character could not be expected to change the interpretation of the Russian policy during the Revolution expounded by Von Sybel, Brückner, and Sorel; but it does throw light upon certain phases of the problem and adds in fuller detail Catherine's characterizations of the Revolutionary movement and its European counterplay.

According to M. Larivière, Catherine's liberal inclinations had developed into a conservatism rapidly becoming reactionary before the Revolution began. The transition dated from the execution of Pougatchef in 1775, and continued until 1788. Her experience of power, "son métier de souveraine," led her gradually to abandon the philosophers whom she had cajoled as long as her "glory" had need of them. This does not mean that her vaunted liberality of mind was mere pose: it was sincere to a degree, but not to the degree implied in her earlier eulogies of the philosophers. Though she had a real love of humanity and was liberal by instinct and by education, her liberalism was always, says M. Larivière, obedient to one guide — self-interest. Moreover in principle it was the liberalism of the eighteenth-century enlightened despot. It had little in common with the spirit which wrought such fundamental changes in France after 1789. If oppression took traditional forms, in her eyes it was not oppression but law. Arbitrariness was what she detested. Her notion of liberty makes this clear. While she was still a grand-duchess she wrote: "Liberté, âme de toutes choses, sans vous tout est mort. Je veux qu'on obéisse aux lois, mais point d'esclavage. Je veux un but général de rendre heureux, et point de caprice, ni de bizarrerie, ni de

tyrannie qui y déroge." According to this, liberty is the freedom of the individual from unreasonable and vexatious interference; but the individual must content himself with the limits historically set for his walk and conversation, and never try to reset those limits to fit any new, metaphysical theory of society. A Russian serf might be said to enjoy a measure of liberty so defined. When the triumphant Jacobins of 1793 talked about "saving liberty," they did not mean such liberty at all; they meant an ideal social structure, erected on the foundation of equality and popular sovereignty, and in almost every respect contrary to that ancient régime under which alone Catherine felt that her sort of liberty could flourish. Perhaps they had as much respect for individual liberty as Catherine, for she did not hesitate to sacrifice it if it clashed with imperial authority, any more than they when it often took sides with the counter-revolution. Even her most strikingly liberal act, the organization of the great Legislative Commission in 1767, to revise and codify the laws, had little substantial value. The Commission was, as M. Larivière remarks, "trop inspirée de l'avis officiel," and "servile vis-à-vis du pouvoir, n'ayant de l'indépendance que l'apparence." Catherine would have tolerated nothing else, however acute her "legislomanie" became.

When the Notables and the States-General met, Catherine compared them to her Legislative Commission and showed herself thus to be "à cent lieues de se douter que les États-Généraux représentent la vraie France, et voudront être obéis." In case their spirits became heated they might, she suggested, be regaled with a bit of vigorous foreign policy, say an interference in Holland against the Stadtholder's party. But the capture of the Bastille instantly dissipated these Machiavellian illusions. Henceforward Catherine had only hard words for the National Assembly and for everybody else in France except the *émigrés* whom a false sense of honor and an untimely solicitude for their own safety had led across the frontier. The Assembly was "l'hydre aux 1200 têtes," composed of "avocats," "procureurs," "savetiers," "cordonniers," and the Revolution was "L'Égrillarde." Even the poor King got his share of abuse, for she told her private secretary, Khrapovitski, that Louis was responsible. "Il est ivre chaque soir," she said, "et le mène qui veut: d'abord Breteuil, du parti de la reine; puis le prince de Condé et le comte d'Artois; enfin Lafayette." Nor did her respect for him increase when France, in 1792, came to have virtually three ministers at the Court of Saint Petersburg: M. Genet officially representing the French government, Comte d'Esterhazy managing the interests of the Comte d'Artois, while the Marquis de Bombelles represented Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette personally. Catherine had no patience with "gens qui agissent sans discontinuer avec deux avis parfaitement contradictoires, l'un en public, l'autre en secret."

However vehement Catherine's hatred and condemnation of the Revolution became, she was too clear-sighted to be led into any attempt at armed intervention contrary to Russia's real interests, which centred in

Poland and at Constantinople rather than on the Rhine. Although at one time she appeared to support the project of Gustavus III. for a descent on the coast of Normandy, M. Larivière proves that "elle le fit sans enthousiasme et avec l'arrière-pensée de l'éviter," and she felt relieved when the Swedish king's death terminated her agreement with him. Her desire for the restoration of the Bourbon kings to absolute authority was largely due to her hope that France might unite with her in the settlement of the Eastern question. This hope the Revolution had defeated. The day after the Bastille was taken, her ambassador, Simoline, had written: "Ce serait une illusion de compter maintenant sur l'alliance de la France, et, encore plus, sur son importance politique." But France might still be made to serve her purposes if by its Revolution her own rivals, Austria and Prussia, could be kept busy in the west while she absorbed or destroyed the kingdom of Poland. In 1792 she confessed to Khrapovitski: "Je me casse la tête pour entraîner les cours de Vienne et de Berlin à s'immiscer dans les affaires de France . . . je veux les engager dans les affaires avoir les coudées franches. J'ai en vue beaucoup d'entreprises inachevées et il faut qu'ils soient occupés pour ne pas m'entraver dans l'exécution." This passage leaves nothing to be desired in explicitness. Moreover it is significant of the real game the European powers began to play from the moment the Revolution weakened France and menaced them. The intention attributed to them of fighting to restore the Bourbons was simply a convenient popular illusion. Conquests and provinces were their real aim, as M. Sorel has so brilliantly shown. The France of 1792-1794 is to be studied in the full consciousness of such dangers to its unity, and not judged merely in accordance with abstract ethical considerations which had no standing in the European politics of the period. M. Larivière gives Catherine full credit for her steadfastness in the pursuit of her purpose during those tumultuous years. Without sufficient justification, nevertheless, he appears to consider her assertion that she meant to fight Jacobinism at Warsaw an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the world. May 9, 1792, a few days after she had ordered her troops to invade Poland, she wrote to Grimm: "Apparemment vous ignorez que la Jacobinière de Varsovie est en correspondance régulière avec celle de Paris." Catherine was sincere enough in writing this. The Polish patriots, the authors of the constitution of May 3, 1791, had repeatedly called to mind the example set by the French National Assembly,¹ and in that Assembly, soon after the news of the Polish revolution reached Paris, Menou referred to the Diet in these words: "Ce sénat . . . vient par un élan sublime d'amour pour la liberté et de respect pour les droits des peuples, d'adopter les principales bases de notre constitution."² Catherine was not far out of the way in thinking that the two movements embodied the same premise, so pernicious in her eyes, namely, "Dans la société tout pouvoir émane essentiellement de la volonté de la nation."³

¹ Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, II. 214.

² *Moniteur*, VIII. 843. ³ Quoted by Sorel, II. 213.

M. Larivière practically acknowledges that this principle was what she seemed to detest in the French Revolution, for he remarks that she never drew any line of distinction between the Constituent and the Legislative Assembly or the Convention. Still he finds some contradiction in Catherine's conduct because she supported the champions of despotic authority for France, while at the same time she sought to destroy the strong monarchical government provided in Poland by the new constitution. This is a confusion of mind due to the similarity of words covering totally dissimilar processes. It is safe to say that the *émigrés* would never have subscribed to a constitution like that of Poland, neither would the Polish patriots have struggled for a monarchy after the ideals cherished at Coblentz.

In one instance Catherine showed herself astonishingly liberal even when the reactionary spirit had seemingly taken complete possession of her mind. This was the retention of La Harpe at court as the tutor of her grandsons, one of whom was to become the Emperor Alexander, although La Harpe did not hesitate to identify the cause of political and social Revolution with that of philosophy. M. Larivière might have added point to his description of this affair had he quoted the young Alexander's remark to Prince Adam Czartoryski about the French Revolution, instead of alluding only to the controversy in which Alexander argued against the principle of hereditary monarchies. Alexander said that "he had taken the strongest interest in the French Revolution, and that while condemning its terrible excesses, he wished the French Republic success and rejoiced at its establishment."¹

The later chapters of M. Larivière's book give much curious information about Catherine's opinions of men like Necker and Mirabeau, and her dealings with Sénac de Meilhan, who proposed to write a history of her reign. In the sections on Necker he carries minute scholarship to a profitless extent in writing six pages on what Catherine thought of Madame Necker, with the conclusion that she evidently regarded Madame Necker as a meritorious woman: "Tout, du moins, porte à le croire; car elle s'abstint de le dire." As an appendix to his work M. Larivière publishes the remarkable memoir of Catherine on the Revolution, written in 1792, which serves to confirm the conclusions he has reached. There are a few errors in the proof-reading of dates which will doubtless be corrected in a subsequent edition.

HENRY E. BOURNE.

Napoleone: Una Pagina storico-psicologica del Genio. Per AUGUSTO TEBALDI, professore nella R. Università di Padova. (Padova: Angelo Draghi. 1895. Pp. iii, 168.)

WE have in this book a study of Napoleon from the point of view of a professor of mental diseases. His apology for offering a new contribution

¹ *Memoirs of Prince Adam Czartoryski*, edited by Adam Gielgud (London, 1888), I. iii.